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7 Attorneys for Plaintiff

8 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

9 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

10 THERESA BROOKE, a married woman
11 dealing with her sole and separate claim,

12 Plaintiff,

13 vs.

14 EL ENCANTO INC., a Delaware
15 corporation,

16 Defendant.

Case No:

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

(JURY TRIAL DEMANDED)

17 Plaintiff alleges:

18 **PARTIES**

19 1. Plaintiff Theresa Brooke is a married woman. Plaintiff is legally disabled,
20 and is therefore a member of a protected class under the ADA, 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2),
21 the regulations implementing the ADA set forth at 28 CFR §§ 36.101 et seq., the
22 California Unruh Civil Rights Act. Plaintiff ambulates with the aid of a wheelchair due
23 to the loss of a leg.

24 2. Defendant, El Encanto Inc., owns and/or operates and does business as
25 the hotel El Encanto, a Belmond Hotel, located at 800 Alvarado Place, Santa Barbara,
26 California 93103. Defendant's hotel is a public accommodation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §
27 12181(7)(A), which offers public lodging services. On information and belief,
28 Defendant's hotel was built or renovated after March 15, 2012.

JURISDICTION

3. Jurisdiction in this Court is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 42 U.S.C. § 12188.

4. Plaintiff's claims asserted herein arose in this judicial district and Defendant does substantial business in this judicial district.

5. Venue in this judicial district is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and (c) in that this is the judicial district in which a substantial part of the acts and omissions giving rise to the claims occurred.

6. Pursuant to *Arroyo v. Rosas*, supplemental jurisdiction is appropriate over Plaintiff's Unruh claim. On a case-specific analysis, there are no compelling reasons to decline jurisdiction.

ALLEGATIONS

7. Plaintiff alleges that Defendant's hotel does not have a compliant access aisle at the passenger loading zone adjacent to the hotel lobby in violation of Sections 209 and 503 of the 2010 Standards. An access aisle has specific requirements to be compliant with the Standards: It must be (1) 60 inches wide and at least 20 feet long, (2) it must have an accessible route adjoining it, and (3) it cannot be within a vehicular way. Section 503.3.

8. She further alleges that Defendant's hotel does not comply with Section 209.4 of the 2010 Standards because valet services are provided, but no access aisle is provided.

9. The requirement for an access aisle at a passenger loading zone is immensely important for a person in a wheelchair such as Plaintiff, as it provides safe access to the entry of the hotel and deters others from placing encumbrances or obstacles there such as a vehicle parking. An access aisle is akin to a cross-walk for pedestrians. Absence of an access aisle where required creates dangerous conditions for a person in a wheelchair such as Plaintiff.

1 10. Plaintiff formerly worked in the hospitality industry. She is an avid
2 traveler across California for purposes of leisure travel and to “test” whether various
3 hotels comply with disability access laws, doing so at least once per month. Testing is
4 encouraged by the Ninth Circuit.

5 11. In early June 2025, Plaintiff personally visited Defendant’s hotel, which
6 has a passenger loading zone. Defendant’s hotel has a passenger loading zone because
7 pickup and dropoff occurs there and it is located directly outside of the lobby entrance.
8 There are also design features showing an intent for utilization as a passenger loading
9 zone. According to the U.S. Access Board Technical Guidelines on Passenger Loading
10 Zones, “many hotel entrances” have the design features indicating an intent to utilize as
11 PLZs.

12 12. While at Defendant’s hotel, she discovered that Defendant’s hotel has a
13 barrier to entry to the lobby, which is that the passenger loading zone does not have an
14 access aisle compliant with Section 503.3. It is an absolute requirement to have an
15 access aisle at a passenger loading zone pursuant to Sections 209 and 503. The
16 requirement of an access aisle at a passenger loading zone relates to Plaintiff’s
17 disability of not having one leg and being forced to use a wheelchair because access
18 aisles are required so persons in a wheelchair can maneuver without threat of danger
19 from other vehicles and without other encumbrances obstructing their pathway. The
20 lobby, therefore, is inaccessible to Plaintiff by way of the passenger loading zone
21 because there is no access aisle.

22 13. Additionally, Defendant’s hotel provides for valet parking services.
23 Section 209.4 of the Standards requires a mandatory passenger loading zone and access
24 aisle where valet parking services are provided, but Defendant does not provide for an
25 access aisle as indicated above. Accordingly, Defendant also violates Section 209.4
26 because it provides for valet but does not provide for an access aisle.

1 means that providing access is easily accomplishable without significant difficulty or
2 expense.

3 23. Defendant's conduct is ongoing, and Plaintiff invokes her statutory right
4 to declaratory and injunctive relief, as well as costs and attorneys' fees.

5 24. Without the requested injunctive relief, Defendant's non-compliance with
6 the ADA's requirements that its passenger loading zone be fully accessible to, and
7 independently useable by, disabled people is likely to recur.

8 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant as follows:

- 9 a. DECLARATORY Judgment that at the commencement of this action
10 Defendant was in violation of the specific requirements of Title III of the
11 ADA described above, and the relevant implementing regulations of the
12 ADA;
- 13 b. Permanent injunction pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12188(a)(2) and 28 CFR §
14 36.504(a) which directs Defendant to take all steps necessary to bring its
passenger loading zone into full compliance with the requirements set
15 forth in the ADA;
- 16 c. Payment of costs and attorney's fees;
- 17 d. Provision of whatever other relief the Court deems just, equitable and
appropriate.

18 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

19 25. Plaintiff incorporates all allegations heretofore set forth.

20 26. Defendant has discriminated against Plaintiff and others in that it has
21 failed to make its public lodging services fully accessible to, and independently usable
22 by, individuals who are disabled in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a) and §
23 12182(b)(2)(iv) and the 2010 Standards, as described above.

24 27. Defendant has discriminated against Plaintiff in that it has failed to
25 remove architectural barriers to make its lodging services fully accessible to, and
26 independently usable by individuals who are disabled in violation of 42 U.S.C.
27 §12182(b)(A)(iv) and the 2010 Standards, as described above. Compliance with the
28

1 2010 Standards would neither fundamentally alter the nature of Defendant's lodging
2 services nor result in an undue burden to Defendant.

3 28. In violation of the 2010 Standards, Defendant's hotel valet parking area
4 does not have a disability access aisle compliant with Section 209.4 of the Standards.

5 29. Compliance with 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv) and the 2010 Standards,
6 as described above, is readily achievable by the Defendant. *Id.* Readily achievable
7 means that providing access is easily accomplishable without significant difficulty or
8 expense.

9 30. Defendant's conduct is ongoing, and Plaintiff invokes her statutory right
10 to declaratory and injunctive relief, as well as costs and attorneys' fees.

11 31. Without the requested injunctive relief, Defendant's non-compliance with
12 the ADA's requirements that its valet parking area be fully accessible to, and
13 independently useable by, disabled people is likely to recur.

14 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant as follows:

- 15 a. Declaratory Judgment that at the commencement of this action Defendant
16 was in violation of the specific requirements of Title III of the ADA
17 described above, and the relevant implementing regulations of the ADA;
18 b. Permanent injunction pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12188(a)(2) and 28 CFR §
19 36.504(a) which directs Defendant to take all steps necessary to bring its
20 valet parking area into full compliance with the requirements set forth in
21 the ADA;
22 c. Payment of costs and attorney's fees;
23 d. Provision of whatever other relief the Court deems just, equitable and
24 appropriate.

25 **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

26 32. Plaintiff realleges all allegations heretofore set forth.

27 33. Defendant has violated the Unruh by denying Plaintiff equal access to its
28 public accommodation on the basis of her disability as outlined above.

1 34. Unruh provides for declaratory and monetary relief to “aggrieved
2 persons” who suffer from discrimination on the basis of their disability.

3 35. Plaintiff has been damaged by the Defendant’s non-compliance with
4 Unruh.

5 36. Pursuant to Cal Civ. Code §52, Plaintiff is further entitled to such other
6 relief as the Court considers appropriate, including monetary damages in an amount of
7 \$4,000.00, and not more.

8 37. Pursuant to Unruh, Plaintiff is entitled to attorney’s fees and costs in an
9 amount to be proven at trial.

10 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant as follows:

- 11 a. Declaratory Judgment that at the commencement of this action Defendant
12 was in violation of the specific requirements of Unruh; and
- 13 b. Permanent injunction pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 12188(a)(2) and 28 CFR §
14 36.504(a) which directs Defendant to take all steps necessary to bring its
15 passenger loading zone into full compliance with the requirements set
16 forth in the ADA;
- 17 c. Payment of costs and attorney’s fees;
- 18 d. Damages in the amount of \$8,000.00; and
- 19 e. Provision of whatever other relief the Court deems just, equitable and
20 appropriate.

21 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

22 Plaintiff hereby demands a jury trial on issues triable by a jury.

23 RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 6th day of June, 2025.

24 

25 _____
26 P. Kristofer Strojnik (242728)
27 Attorneys for Plaintiff
28

VERIFICATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED this 6th day of June, 2025.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'T. Brooke', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Theresa Marie Brooke